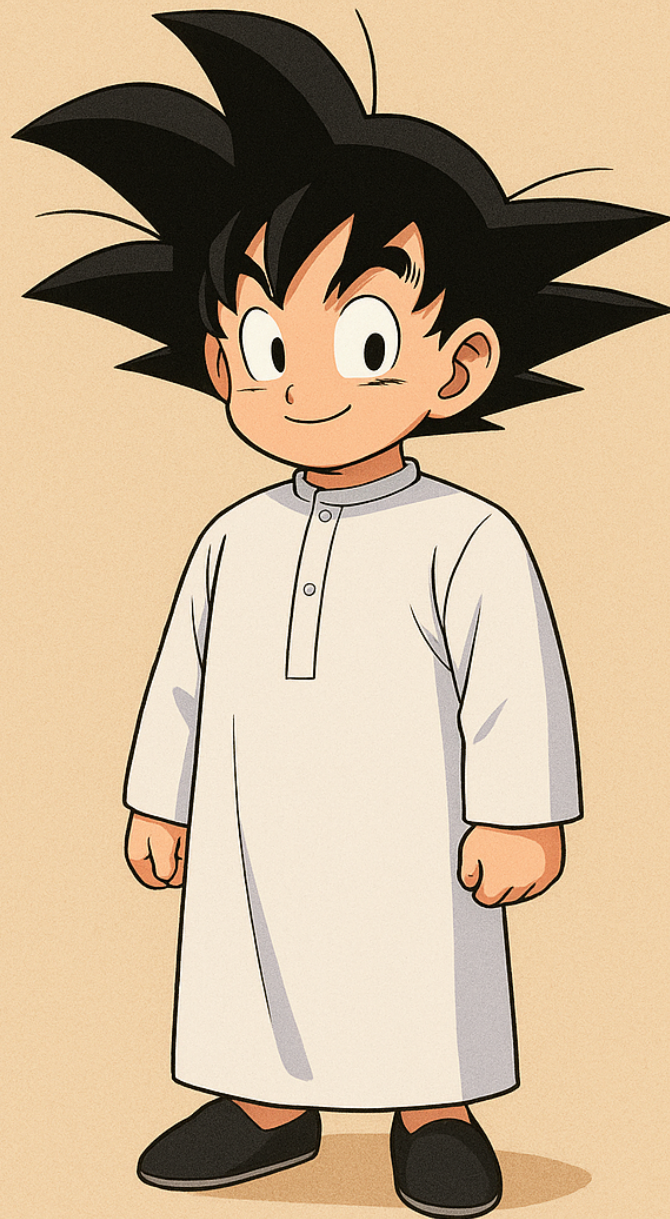


THE RAMADAN AFTERMATH



The meal winds down, the air still buzzing with easy conversation. Goku suddenly perks up, sniffing the air like a radar locking onto a target.

Goku:

“Hey... is that *shawarma*? Or— hold on — *kebabs*? There’s a food festival in town! I can smell it from here!”

Vegeta rolls his eyes, though you can see the hint of a smirk tugging at the corner of his mouth.

Vegeta:

“Of course you can. Your stomach has better senses than your brain.”

Goku laughs it off and gets up.

Goku:

“I’ll be right back! Just wanna check it out!”

Before anyone can object, he instant-transmissions straight to the festival. Bright lights, sizzling grills, spices in the air — Goku’s eyes go wide.

Goku:

“WHOA... this place is amazing!”

Stall owners stare as this cheerful, spiky-haired guy casually demolishes samples from every booth. He compliments every chef with genuine excitement, and they love him immediately.

One chef, an older Iranian man with a thick mustache and an even thicker accent, watches Goku devour a plate of kebab koobideh like it’s nothing.

Chef:

“You! My friend... you eat like a lion and smile like a child. Tell me — have you ever been to Iran?”

Goku wipes his mouth, still chewing.

Goku:

“Huh? Iran? Nope! But your food is incredible!”

The chef beams.

Chef:

“Then you must come! We’re hosting the *International Strength & Taste Festival* next month — a food competition for the world’s greatest eaters and the world’s greatest chefs! I want you as my guest.”

Goku freezes — eyes sparkling.

Goku:

“Wait... a food competition? In a new country? With new dishes??”

He looks like he's reached Super Saiyan just thinking about it.

Chef (laughing):

"I take that as a yes?"

Goku:

"Oh, definitely YES!"

The chef hands him an ornate golden invitation, decorated with Persian calligraphy and patterns.

Goku:

"Chi—chi's gonna freak out! This is AWESOME!"

He instant-transmissions back to the group mid-celebration, waving the invitation triumphantly.

Goku:

"Guys! I got invited to IRAN for a FOOD COMPETITION!"

Everyone stares.

Piccolo:

"...Of course you did."

Vegeta sighs.

Vegeta:

"At least bring back something edible. And don't embarrass us."

Goku grins, holding the invitation like a treasure.

Goku:

"No promises!"

Goku lands softly outside the house, still holding the golden invitation like it's a Dragon Ball. The lights inside are on. He can hear Chi-Chi humming while preparing something in the kitchen.

Goku gulps.

He can fight earth threatening enemies, but telling Chi-Chi he's leaving the country? Different level of fear.

He steps in.

Goku:

"Uh... Chi-Chi? Honey? I'm home!"

Chi-Chi pokes her head out of the kitchen, apron on, hair tied up.

Chi-Chi:

"You're back early. Did you eat? I made soup!"

Goku freezes.

He DEFINITELY ate.

Goku (nervous laugh):

"Oh! Uh... I mean... I could still eat! Maybe!"

Chi-Chi narrows her eyes.

Chi-Chi:

"Goku. What did you do?"

Goku waves his hands.

Goku:

"Nothing! Nothing bad! Actually something great! AMAZING even!"

He pulls out the golden invitation.

Goku:

"Look! I got invited to a food competition! In... uh... Iran!"

Chi-Chi blinks. Twice.

Chi-Chi:

"Iran? As in— another country? As in *you leaving again?*"

Goku:

"Yeah! But just for food! No fighting! Just eating! They said I'm the perfect guest!"

He beams like a kid who got a perfect score on a test he didn't study for.

Chi-Chi crosses her arms.

Deadly silence.

Chi-Chi:

"Goku... you promised you'd stay out of trouble."

Goku:

"It's *food*, Chi-Chi! The only trouble is how much I can eat!"

He tries a goofy smile. It works... a little.

Chi-Chi sighs, pinching the bridge of her nose.

Chi-Chi:

"What exactly is this competition?"

Goku (excited):

"They bring the best chefs and the best eaters from around the world! There'll be kebabs, rice dishes, stews, sweets— SO MANY SWEETS— and I'll represent *Earth*! Well... kind of."

Chi-Chi stares at him. Then she softens — just a fraction.

Chi-Chi:

"...Will there be a prize?"

Goku thinks. Hard.

Goku:

"Uh... honor? Friendship? Maybe more food?"

Chi-Chi groans.

Chi-Chi:

"Goku, you're impossible."

He steps closer, gently putting a hand on her shoulder.

Goku:

"I promise it'll be safe. No fighting. No gods. Just food and people."

Chi-Chi looks at him for a long moment... then smiles, small but real.

Chi-Chi:

"Fine. But TWO CONDITIONS."

Goku stands up straight like a soldier.

Goku:

"Yes ma'am!"

Chi-Chi:

"One — you come back immediately after you're done."

Goku:

"Of course!"

Chi-Chi:

"Two — bring me something nice from Iran. Something *that isn't food*."

Goku scratches his head.

Goku:

"Oh! Okay... uh... like a rug?"

Chi-Chi:

"That works."

Goku hugs her, relieved.

Goku:

"You're the best, Chi-Chi!"

Chi-Chi (pretending not to smile):

"Just don't embarrass the family."

Goku laughs, holding the invitation tight.

Goku:

"No promises!"

Goku grins and practically bounces out the door. Before leaving, he gathers the rest of the Z-fighters: Piccolo, Krillin, Gohan, Trunks, and even Bulma.

Goku:

"Everyone! I'm going to Iran for a food competition! You have to come cheer me on!"

Trunks raises an eyebrow.

Trunks:

"Seriously? You're competing in cooking now?"



Krillin chuckles.

Krillin:

"Knowing you, you'll either win... or cause a small kitchen disaster."

Gohan smiles, placing a reassuring hand on Goku's shoulder.

Gohan:

"Whatever happens, I'm proud you're always challenging yourself — in every way."

Piccolo crosses his arms, his usual stoic expression softening slightly.

Piccolo:

"Just don't let your appetite get the best of you before the competition."

Goku laughs, fists clenched in excitement.

Goku:

"Don't worry! I'll train my taste buds just like my fighting skills!"

And with that, Goku sets off on his next adventure — this time, a culinary one, the scent of spices and adventure guiding him toward Iran and the unknown delights of the festival.

Goku, wearing his usual orange gi, stands at Capsule Corp's landing pad. His friends—Piccolo, Krillin, Gohan, and Trunks—are gathered around. Trunks is in a black Sudani kandora, looking a bit confused but respectful. Goku waves energetically:

Goku: "Alright, everyone! I'm off to Iran! I'll be back after trying some amazing food!"

Piccolo: "Don't get yourself into trouble. And eat responsibly."

Krillin: "Wait... are we allowed to send a Saiyan that far just for food?"

Gohan: "Just... come back in one piece, Dad."

Trunks fidgets with his kandora sleeves.

Trunks: "Make sure to bring back something cool... maybe a souvenir?"

Goku grins and puts his finger onto his forehead.

Goku smiles, closes his eyes, and places two fingers on his forehead.

Goku: "Here I go! Iran, here I come!"

In a blink, he vanishes from Capsule Corp's landing pad—no wind, no sound, just a flash of light where he stood. His friends are left staring at the empty spot.

Krillin: "...Wow, he really didn't waste any time."

Gohan: "Instant Transmission always blows my mind."

Piccolo: "Focus, everyone. He's going somewhere unfamiliar. If he runs into trouble, we might need to help."

Goku appears above the suburbs of Tehran and lands lightly on the ground. The streets are lively—strange colorful festivals are taking place, people dancing, music blaring, lights everywhere. Goku scratches his head and mutters:

Goku: "Hmm... I have a bad feeling about this..."

As he steps forward, suddenly, **gunshots ring out!** Bullets whiz past him. With ease, Goku sidesteps, ducks, and spins, moving like a blur.

He spots the gunners—a few shady men aiming at him from rooftops. With a smirk, Goku flicks one of the gunner's foreheads with a finger, sending him sprawling, utterly stunned.

Goku (grinning): "Whoa... they're not very good at this!"

The remaining gunners panic, firing wildly, but Goku effortlessly avoids every shot. He then **prepares to confront them directly**, ready to turn the fight into something more... Saiyan-style.

The remaining gunners scramble, firing wildly, but Goku moves faster than their eyes can follow. He **twirls through the air**, using Instant Transmission to appear behind one, flicking him aside, then reappearing in front of another. Within seconds, all the attackers are either unconscious or running for cover.

Goku dusts off his hands, looking around at the festival: strange floats, colorful banners, and people wearing masks and costumes. The crowd seems unaware of the gunmen, or maybe they're part of some secret celebration.

Goku (thinking): "Huh... weird. Definitely not the usual food festival... but still... smells amazing!"

Suddenly, a **mysterious figure** steps out from the crowd—a tall man in a flowing robe, with a calm but intense aura. He smiles slightly at Goku.

Mysterious Man: "You don't belong here, stranger... yet somehow, I felt your arrival."

Goku scratches his head, still smiling:

Goku: "Uh... yeah, I'm just here to check out the food! But, uh... what's with all the shooting?"

The man's eyes narrow, and the festival around them seems to **shift subtly**, as if hiding a secret beneath its colorful exterior.

Goku senses **a strange power**, something different from anything he's faced before, and **prepares for whatever comes next**, all while trying to enjoy the tantalizing smells of the festival food.

The mysterious man steps fully into view, his **dark aura pressing down** on the surroundings. Goku squints, noticing the familiar yet chilling features: **black hair, pale skin, and that same smirk Goku's seen in battles before.**

Goku (frowning): "Wait... you look like me... but... evil?"

Goku Black (smirking): "Ah... so the famed Saiyan from another world arrives... How delightful."

The festival lights flicker unnaturally as Goku Black raises a hand. The air grows tense, and even the music seems to warp into a strange, ominous rhythm.

Goku (thinking): “Hm... this guy’s strong. I better not take him lightly... but I’m hungry, too. Ugh, why do the best food and the worst fights always happen together?”

Before Goku can react further, **Goku Black suddenly teleports behind him** with a blur—Instant Transmission of his own.

Goku Black: “You shouldn’t have come here... but since you did, I will enjoy every moment.”

Goku smiles, cracking his knuckles:

Goku: “Alright... guess we’re having a little sparring session before dinner!”

They launch at each other in a **flash of speed and energy**, dodging through the festival stalls, narrowly avoiding the crowds. Lights, colors, and floating festival decorations blur past as the two Gokus clash.

Goku (thinking mid-battle): “Man... this guy really is me... but meaner. And... darker. I wonder if he even eats.”

The fight escalates—punches and kicks faster than the eye can follow, Ki blasts bouncing off buildings, and festival-goers ducking for cover, unaware they’re witnessing a **battle of gods in disguise**.

Goku and Goku Black face off. Goku crosses his arms, **grinning confidently**, his aura flaring faintly as he taps into **Super Saiyan**.

Goku: “Alright, I’m gonna keep it simple—Super Saiyan it is!”

Goku Black (smirking): “Then I shall enjoy seeing you fall.”

They clash—**blows echo like thunder**, each strike throwing up dust and scattering festival decorations. Goku notices **Goku Black’s speed matches his own**, but his techniques are sharper, ruthless.

Goku (thinking): “Hm... he fights like me... but more precise... gotta be careful.”

Goku briefly **uses Kaio-ken x2**, dodging a series of swift punches and kicks from Black, then counters with a **Rapid-Fire Ki Blast Barrage**, forcing Black to retreat a few steps.

Goku (shouting mid-battle): “Okay, okay... you’re strong... but not unbeatable!”

Black smirks and **teleports behind Goku again**, ready to strike. Goku senses it, flicks his head, and counters with a **Super Saiyan punch that sends Black sliding back across the street**, barely missing festival stalls.

Goku (laughing): “Man... I hope the food’s still here after this fight.”

The two circle each other, the **suburbs of Tehran looking like a battlefield**, with decorations fluttering and crowds running for cover. Both fighters are enjoying the duel—the thrill, the technique, the raw energy—classic Saiyan style.

The clash continues. Goku swings, blasts, and dodges—but **Goku Black anticipates every move**, countering with brutal precision. Every punch Goku throws is **dodged or deflected**, every kick blocked. Black's attacks are quick, sharp, and relentless.

Goku (panting, wiping blood from his lip): "H-Huh... you're... strong... way stronger than I expected!"

Goku Black (cold smirk): "Did you think your strength alone would be enough?"

Goku tries **Kaio-ken x3** and even **Super Saiyan 3**, his hair long and aura blazing. He charges with all his might—**Kamehameha!**

But Black **teleports behind him mid-blast**, flicks him across the street like a ragdoll, sending him crashing into a wall. Goku staggers, dazed, barely getting to his feet.

Goku (thinking): "Man... he's... he's not holding back at all... I've gotta... think!"

Black floats calmly, aura dark and oppressive.

Goku Black: "You are strong... but still so fragile."

Goku (grinning weakly): "Heh... okay... maybe I can't beat him straight up... gotta get creative..."

At this point, Goku is **completely outclassed** in raw power and technique—but he's still clever, adaptable, and resilient. This sets up the perfect moment for a **trick or clever use of the environment**, instead of trying to go toe-to-toe, which would be suicide.



Goku (panting, wiping sweat from his lip): "I've gotta... try something... anything!"

He lunges toward the glow, not realizing it's enchanted. The moment he touches it, a flash of light surrounds him.

Goku (shocked): "Huh...? What—?!"

He stumbles back, his body shrinking rapidly, hair shortening, hands and feet becoming tiny. He stares at his own small hands, eyes wide.

Goku: "Wait... I-I'm... a kid?! Wha—how?!"

Goku Black stops mid-step, momentarily confused at the sudden shift.

Goku (thinking): "Woah... okay... didn't plan this... but maybe... maybe I can still use this to my advantage..."



Goku (looking up at the towering Black, fists clenched): "Heh... heh... okay... small body, big brain!"

Goku darts forward, deceptively fast despite his size. Black smirks, raising a hand to blast him.

Goku (thinking quickly): *"If I try to fight him head-on... I'm toast. Gotta use speed... maybe the environment... hmm..."*

Goku leaps onto a nearby car, bouncing off like a spring, causing Black to momentarily pause.

Goku (shouting, taunting): "Catch me if you can!"

Goku zips between alleyways, leaping over fences and dodging blasts that flatten the pavement behind him. Despite being smaller, his movements are unpredictable—harder for Black to target precisely.

Goku Black (irritated, flicking away debris with a swipe): "Annoying little pest..."

Black teleports to intercept, but Goku suddenly swings a lamppost, knocking it toward him. Black narrowly dodges, and Goku uses the distraction to scramble higher onto a rooftop.

Goku (thinking, grinning): *"Height advantage... maybe I can lure him into a trap!"*

He spots a construction site nearby, with scaffolding, crates, and dangling beams.

Goku (calling out): "Hey, big guy! Bet you can't hit me here!"

Black floats above, aura flaring, analyzing: *"A child's tricks won't stop me..."*

Goku quickly sets a makeshift trap—he rolls a crate, ties a dangling beam with his small but nimble hands, and positions it perfectly along Black's likely landing path.

Goku (thinking): *"If he's that cocky... he won't expect this..."*

Black smirks, charges down to strike, and—CRASH! The trap snaps into motion, sending a beam swinging and a crate flying. Black barely deflects, but the force staggers him slightly, giving Goku a chance to retreat further.

Goku (panting, exhilarated): "Heh... yeah! Even small, I can make him sweat!"

Goku Black (frowning, clearly annoyed now): "Interesting... clever little Saiyan. I underestimated you... again."

Goku (thinking): *"Okay... this is working. I can't beat him head-on, but maybe I can outsmart him long enough to turn this around..."*

The fight is now less about brute force and more about Goku using his wits, speed, and environment to level the playing field—even as a child.

The air still crackled from the lingering energy of Goku Black's attack. Kid Goku, barely able to stand, clenched his fists, gritting his teeth.

Goku (panting, voice trembling): "I... I can't... let him—"

He tries to gather energy for a Kamehameha, but Black's beam hits first. The force slams him across the city streets of Tehran, sending him hurtling through the air. Buildings blur past

as he flies out of the suburbs, over the mountains, finally crashing into a remote, abandoned town. Dust rises around him.

Goku (coughing, twitching, voice weak): “Ugh... gotta... hide...”

He drags himself up slowly, blood trickling from his lip, tiny fists clenched. His small body shakes violently, every muscle screaming in pain, but he focuses. Slowly, carefully, he **suppresses his energy**. His aura disappears, leaving only the faint rustling of broken windows and dry wind.

Goku (thinking, whispering): *“If he senses me... it’s over. Can’t... let him know I’m here...”*

His knees buckle, and the exhaustion overwhelms him. With a shuddering sigh, he collapses onto the cracked ground, barely conscious. His breathing slows, energy dampened, aura gone—he’s invisible to Goku Black’s senses.

For a moment, the only sound is the wind whistling through the abandoned buildings. Goku’s small chest rises and falls.

Goku (muttering in a faint voice): “I... I’ll... figure... something... out...”

And then... he **faints**, leaving the town eerily silent, with only the faintest glimmer of his suppressed Ki hiding him from his relentless pursuer.

Goku Black hovers above the mountains, scanning the area with his piercing gaze. He senses nothing. His smirk falters slightly.

Goku Black (cold, frustrated): “Where... did he go?!”

He floats down, eyes narrowing, scanning every alley, every building, but the faint traces of energy are gone. Kid Goku has suppressed his Ki perfectly.

Goku Black (growling): “Clever... very clever. But this doesn’t change anything. He’s only delaying the inevitable.”

After a few moments of searching, frustration mounting, he finally sighs and floats upward, letting out a dark chuckle.

Goku Black: “For now... I’ll leave. But he can’t hide forever.”

With a burst of speed, he vanishes into the sky, leaving the abandoned town silent. Dust settles over the cracked streets, broken windows, and empty buildings.

On the ground, **kid Goku lies unconscious**, small and battered, but hidden from Black’s senses. The faintest rise and fall of his chest is the only sign that he’s still alive.

Goku (thinking weakly, barely conscious): *“...he’s gone... for now...”*

The moment marks a temporary reprieve—a chance for Goku to recover, strategize, and maybe, just maybe, turn the tables in the future.

Back at Capsule Corp, Vegeta leans over the sensors, frowning. The faint energy signal he's sensing is **odd**—it's fading gradually, almost disappearing.

Vegeta (gritting his teeth, confused): "Huh... that energy... is it... Kakarot?!"

He frowns deeper, tapping the scanner. The reading is weak, inconsistent, almost like it's **struggling to stay stable**.

Vegeta (mutters, annoyed): "This doesn't make any sense... Kakarot's energy isn't this weak... unless..."

He pauses, thinking it could be a residual echo from some fight—or maybe Kakarot is badly injured. But he **has no idea that Goku is now a tiny child**, hiding and suppressing his Ki.

Vegeta (grumbling): "That idiot... I don't know what he's done now... but if he's out there, he better not be screwing around."

Meanwhile, in the abandoned town, **kid Goku lies unconscious**, completely hidden, aura suppressed. Vegeta can't sense him properly—he just sees a faint, fading energy trace and assumes Kakarot is simply badly hurt.

The mystery of Kakarot's strange, weakening energy lingers, leaving Vegeta confused and worried—completely unaware of the **tiny Saiyan hiding safely from Goku Black**.

Far away, in a quiet training area, Gohan pauses mid-meditation. A faint, unusual energy tickles his senses—a weak, trembling pulse unlike anything he's felt recently.

Gohan (thinking, eyes narrowing): "*Dad... that's his energy... but it's... fading... and it feels... strange...*"

He hovers above the ground, scanning the area with his Ki. The energy is so faint and suppressed that he **can't locate it precisely**, but his instincts scream that something is wrong.

Gohan (clenching his fists, worried): "Dad... what happened to you? You're... so weak... I can feel it..."

Though he can sense the energy, it's irregular, almost like it's trying to hide itself. Still, Gohan knows it's serious.

Gohan (determined, whispering): "I have to find him... before something happens..."

The scene is tense: Dad's in trouble, hiding somewhere, and Gohan can sense him—but the energy is faint enough that **Goku Black hasn't found him**, and Vegeta still remains completely unaware.

Gohan, Vegeta, and Piccolo zoom across the landscape, following the faint, fading pulse of Kakarot's energy. None of them realize the shocking truth: **he's tiny now**, reduced to a child.

Gohan (worried, scanning): "His energy... it's so weak... he must be in serious trouble."

Piccolo frowns, eyes narrowing. “Weak, but still there. Someone—or something—has him hurt badly. We need to find him fast.”

Vegeta grits his teeth, irritated and confused. “Hmph... Kakarot doesn’t get this weak unless he’s in *serious* trouble. I don’t like this one bit.”

They follow the energy trail to the abandoned town in the mountains. Dust rises from cracked streets and broken buildings. The faint pulse grows slightly stronger—Goku’s **suppressed Ki giving just the tiniest signal.**

Vegeta (crossing his arms, glaring): “There... somewhere in this dump. He’s here... but why is his energy so... off?”

Gohan glances down at the town, his face tense. “I can feel him, but... he’s barely holding on... Dad...”

Piccolo tilts his head, suspicious. “Something’s not right. His energy feels... different somehow. Like he’s hiding it.”

Unbeknownst to them, **kid Goku is lying unconscious in the shadows**, tiny and fragile, suppressing his Ki perfectly. Their confusion grows—Vegeta and Gohan think Kakarot is just badly injured, not realizing he’s **literally a child hiding right under their noses.**

The wind howls as three streaks of light tear across the sky—**Gohan in the lead, Piccolo close behind, and Vegeta slightly above them, arms folded and aura blazing.**

Gohan (focused, shouting over the wind): “It’s getting weaker! Hurry, we’re running out of time!”

Piccolo’s sharp eyes scan the terrain below—mountain ridges, shattered roads, dust clouds drifting from the earlier blast. He senses the faintest spark of energy in the distance.

Piccolo: “There—straight ahead, near those old buildings.”

Vegeta clicks his tongue, frowning. “Tch. If that’s Kakarot’s energy, he’s in worse shape than I thought. How does he manage to get beaten this badly every time I turn my back?”

Gohan (worried): “He must’ve fought Goku Black again... but this feels different. His Ki’s unstable... small.”

Piccolo glances at him. “Small?”

Gohan (shaking his head): “Not weaker, just... smaller. Like it’s compressed or—”

Vegeta (interrupting, scoffing): “Enough guessing. We’ll see for ourselves when we get there.”

The three push harder, the air rippling behind them as they accelerate. The sky darkens slightly as they approach the edge of the mountain range—where **the faint pulse of Goku’s suppressed Ki still lingers**, hidden deep within the ruins of an abandoned town.

Piccolo (grimly): “Hold on, Goku... we’re almost there.”

The camera pans down through the crumbling rooftops to show **kid Goku lying motionless** amid the debris—his breathing shallow, his body small and battered, completely unaware that help is finally on the way.

The three warriors descend through the dusty air, the ruins silent except for the echo of their boots touching the cracked ground. The faint energy signature leads them to a collapsed street lined with shattered buildings.

Gohan (looking around anxiously): “Dad! I can feel him... he’s close!”

Piccolo closes his eyes, concentrating. His sharp senses pinpoint a faint, hidden Ki just ahead. He strides forward, moving rubble aside with a flick of his wrist.

Piccolo (grimly): “Here.”

He kneels—and freezes. Beneath the dust and debris lies a **small figure**, barely breathing. Gohan’s eyes widen as he rushes over.

Gohan (stunned): “W-What the...? That’s... Dad?! Why’s he... so small!?”

Vegeta lands behind them, staring in disbelief. “You’ve gotta be kidding me... that’s *Kakarot?!*”

Piccolo doesn’t waste time; he lifts the unconscious kid Goku gently with one arm. His expression tightens. “He’s badly hurt... and his energy’s unstable.”

Gohan (panicked): “We need to help him, now!”

Piccolo nods, his aura flickering faintly green as he channels energy into his hand. “Hold on... I can stabilize him for now.”

With a quiet hum, Piccolo’s energy surrounds Goku’s torn and burned clothing. The orange gi flickers, threads reforming and reshaping. In seconds, the fabric transforms into a **sleek white Sudani kandora**, loose and light, fitting Goku’s smaller frame perfectly.

Gohan blinks. “You... changed his clothes?”

Piccolo (calmly): “The gi was shredded. This is more comfortable... and it’ll keep him warm until he wakes up.”

Vegeta crosses his arms, muttering: “Tch... what the hell happened to you this time, Kakarot?”

Piccolo stands, holding the small, unconscious Saiyan. “Let’s get him back to Capsule Corp. Whatever did this... it’s beyond anything we’ve seen.”

The three take off into the sky, the desert wind swirling behind them as they race toward safety — Goku limp in Piccolo’s arms, dressed in his new black kandora, the mystery of his transformation only deepening.

The trio lands hard in the courtyard, dust kicking up as Bulma rushes out the doors, already shouting.

Bulma (wide-eyed): “What the—?! What happened to you guys? And who’s—”
She stops mid-sentence, seeing the tiny, unconscious figure in Piccolo’s arms.
“Wait... is that... Goku?! Why is he a kid!?”

Piccolo lays Goku gently on a stretcher, his expression dark.

Piccolo: “We found him like this. Beaten within an inch of his life.”

Bulma: “No way... He looks like he’s eight years old!”

Gohan kneels beside the stretcher, checking Goku’s pulse. “His breathing’s shallow... but he’s alive. Whoever did this—”

Vegeta (interrupting, fists clenched): “Whoever did this is *dead meat*.”

Bulma quickly wheels out diagnostic equipment, attaching small sensors around Goku’s arm and chest. The readings flicker wildly on the monitor — his energy fluctuating between massive bursts and almost nothing.

Bulma (frowning): “His Ki’s unstable... like something’s constantly draining it and recharging it. This isn’t just a beating — something changed him on a cellular level.”

Gohan: “Mom, can you fix it?”

Bulma: “Not until I understand what happened. You said someone attacked him, right?”

Piccolo glances at Goku, who stirs slightly, eyelids twitching. “He said... the one who did this looked just like him.”

Vegeta (gritting his teeth): “Just like him? What kind of trick is this?”

Gohan: “He called himself Goku Black.”

Bulma freezes. “Goku... *Black*? That sounds like some kind of dark clone or experiment.”

Goku’s voice breaks through, weak but steady: “No... not a clone... it’s me—but not me...”

Everyone turns. Goku’s eyes open slightly, glowing faintly gold under the medical lights.

Goku: “He... he moves like me... fights like me... but he’s colder. Smarter. Stronger.”
He coughs, a flash of pain crossing his face.
“I thought I could stop him, but... every move I made, he already knew it.”

Vegeta: “Then he’s a Saiyan.”

Goku: “He said something about justice... about mortals not deserving power.”

Piccolo’s brow furrows. “Sounds like something divine. Maybe a Kai or something worse.”

Bulma (quietly): “If he can do this to Goku... we need to find out who he is before he finds us.”

Goku grips the edge of the bed weakly. “We don’t have time... he’s not done yet.”

The camera pans out — through the glass dome of Capsule Corp — into the night sky. Far above, dark clouds twist unnaturally, a faint pink aura pulsing within.

Somewhere out there, **Goku Black floats silently**, eyes closed, a faint smile on his lips.

Goku Black (calmly): “Run all you like, Son Goku. You can’t escape divine retribution.”

Lightning flashes — pink and gold — illuminating his silhouette against the clouds.